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## ON A REMARKABLE CHANGE IN THE CHARACTER OF THE FEMALE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES.

ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR THE ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

THE changes which from time to time take place in the external forms and characters of animals, are an interesting department of the science of the philosophical naturalist, for they serve to illustrate the principle of a certain definite subserviency of organised creatures to the conditions in which they live. It is but following out this principle a little further, and still keeping, as we think, within the proper range of that science, to examine and report upon those moral changes which take place in the highest of animated species through the effect of the conditions of social life. It is fully admitted that the variability of humanity—if we may use such an expression—is very great; and of this truth no one can doubt, who considers the difference between the cruel and treacherous savage and the highly-educated man of civilisation. We do not need, however, to take these extreme ends of the history and condition of a people. Even in a single century, or, say, three generations, such improvements take place in national characters, as it would perhaps be difficult to believe, if we had not the best evidence of the fact.

I wish to call attention, on the present evening, to a remarkable change which has taken place, within about a hundred years, or a little more, in the character of the female of our own species. I must first, however, apologise for the nature of the evidence which I have to bring forward. It unfortunately happens, that the human female—at all times an almost hopeless mystery to the naturalist, indeed to men of science generally—was very little studied by zoologists in the days of Seba and Buffon. I am not aware of a single observation on the subject in that age, which can be said to have been set down with scientific accuracy. This is very unfortunate, but it cannot be remedied. It happens, however, that another set of observers—namely, the poets—paid a good deal of attention to the ladies, and have left an immense number of references to them scattered throughout their writings. Now, I am far from saying, that the poets can be accepted as, in themselves, singly, good witnesses, because it is well known that they decline swearing to the truth of what they advance. Yet, when we consider, that we could not attempt to write the history of Greece, or trace its ancient manners, without making use of the writings of its poets, it will, I trust, appear as a thing utterly preposterous, that we should altogether reject such evidence. It is a kind of testimony we cannot dispense with in many cases; and my impression decidedly

is, that, if carefully examined and collated, and accepted only when it is found perfectly self-consistent, and in harmony with the usual tone of men who aim at speaking the truth, we may make a certain limited use of it, even for scientific purposes.

So much being premised, I proceed to remark on the great improvement which appears, from this evidence, to have taken place in the general affections of the human female since the middle of the eighteenth century. The creature, whom we all know to be now yielding, gentle, and kind, to a remarkable degree, is described in the writings of those irregular naturalists, as I may call them, as one of exceedingly barbarous and unrelenting character. From some of the poetical references in question, a literal interpreter might imagine that there were even some organic differences of a notable kind between the women of those days and the present. We hear, for instance, of eyes which had a killing power like those attributed by mediæval zoologists to the basilisk; likewise of bosoms of a marble-like coldness, as if the female of our species had not then been developed, in the circulating organisation at least, beyond the reptilian stage. I must consider these allusions, however, as most probably only metaphorical; for we can scarcely imagine, that even such early naturalists as Aristotle and Pliny would have failed to record such singular peculiarities, if they had had a positive existence. I come at once to the moral characteristics of which they may be accepted as part of the evidence.

It fully appears, then, that the human female, down to the time we are speaking of, was a very cruel creature. While addressed by individuals of the opposite sex with a degree of deference and adulation now totally unknown, she beheld them all with an unbending severity and disdain equally unexampled in our days. The memorials are so abundant, that the difficulty is to make a selection. Turning up, however, a single volume of Ritson's collection of English Songs, we find such passages as the following:

But oh, her colder heart denies  
The thoughts her looks inspire;  
And while in ice that frozen lies,  
Her eyes dart only fire.  
Between extremes I am undone,  
Like plants too northward set;  
Burnt by too violent a sun,  
Or starved for want of heat.

The whole book, indeed, seems to be a series of preachments on this one text. What Aaron Hill says in one page—

Chill, as mountain snow, her bosom,  
Though I tender language use,  
'Tis by cold indifference frozen,  
To my arms and to my muse—

Is echoed by Henry Carey on another—

Must I, ye gods, for ever love?  
Must she for ever cruel prove?  
Must all my torments, all my grief,  
Meet no compassion, no relief?

It appears that even towards a patient reduced to the last stage of bodily distress and weakness, no sort of pity was shown by this merciless being:—

When drooping on the bed of pain,  
I looked on every hope as vain;  
When pitying friends stood weeping by,  
And Death's pale shade seemed hovering nigh;  
No terror could my flame remove,  
Or steal a thought from her I love.

The mischiefs wrought by some specimens in their dealings with other mortals, were occasionally of the dearest kind. One gentleman solemnly says of a particular nymph he had had the misfortune to rank among his acquaintance:

Who sees her must love her, who loves her must die.

Seeing a woman and suffering extinction of life being thus syllogistically connected, we may imagine the wretched consequences to society. The most piteous appeals, such as—

— look to yon celestial sphere,  
Where souls with rapture glow,  
And dread to need that pity there  
Which you denied below—

seem to have been presented in vain. Myra, Lesbia, Clorinda, or by whatever other *sobriquet* these poor swains might designate enchantresses who little deserved such delicacy at their hands, are invariably described as keeping up their savage cruelty to the very last. Some of the victims describe their feelings when approaching the only end which griefs like theirs could have—

Grim king of the ghosts, be true,  
And hurry me hence away;  
My languishing life to you  
A tribute I freely pay:  
To th' Elysian shades I post,  
In hopes to be freed from care,  
Where many a bleeding ghost  
Is hovering in the air.

We have not, indeed, any means of knowing the amount of destruction produced by those pitiless creatures, there having, unfortunately, been no register of mortality, giving, in a reliable manner, the causes of death, till some time after the female character had begun to undergo a favourable change; but from the prevalence in literature of the allusions to such tragic results, we cannot doubt that the evil was of very serious amount. It may, indeed, admit of some doubt, whether the very large mortality of former as compared with the present times, was not owing rather more to this cause than to inferior sanitary conditions, the virulence of small-pox, and other circumstances, to which it has been usually ascribed.

It will be acknowledged as something quite beyond our province to speculate on the teleological aspects of the question, and attempt to define the design which Providence had in view in permitting so much evil to exist. But it is our grateful privilege, as merely observers of the facts of nature, to remark that, with that mercy which shines through the universal plan, it had been so arranged that the savage tendencies of the female breast were limited to a particular period of life. The power and the disposition to treat men cruelly appears seldom to have appeared before the age of seventeen; and the instances in which it lasted beyond twenty-five are rare. After that period of life, if marriage had not intervened, the female heart was usually observed to relent; and I have not been able

to discover a single well-authenticated case of cruelty recorded against an unwedded woman above thirty-five. Thus it appears to have put on very much the aspect of a kind of calenture; and we are left to believe that many a woman, who had acted as a perfect tigress in early life, was converted in due time into one of those winning old maids, or one of those benign widows, who are also the themes of so many allusions in our by-gone literature. In this respect, physiologically, the whole subject assumes a very curious character. We find the hot head still applicable to the young man, avarice to the old; all the great characteristics assigned to particular epochs of male life by our old writers, still remain as they were. How singular that the sanguinary character attributed to the female between eighteen and twenty-five, should alone have undergone a revolution!

That the revolution is a complete one, need not, I presume, be largely insisted on, as the Society must be well aware, from their own observation and experience, that coldness and rigour towards the opposite sex no longer mark the demeanour of womankind at any period of life. A poetical complaint against Myra or Clorinda is never heard; and Mr Farr can at once make clear beyond dispute, that deaths from either the lightnings of female eyes, or the coldness of female bosoms, are not the subject of any return. At evening-parties, the waltz and polka demonstrate the amicable footing on which the two sexes live. Instead of holding out that she is to be sighed for by many, and will, at the utmost, take one, and kill off the rest, the young lady, with that submissiveness and courtesy which mark a high civilisation, and which was doubtless designed to be the highest development of her nature, does not now object that the question should rather be: Who is going to take her? Since Woman has thus been put into her proper social attitude, we see how much sweetness has been infused into those assemblies where the two sexes meet; barring, indeed, certain competitions which occasionally take place amongst the ladies themselves with regard to particular swains, and the little jealousies which will thence arise—a trivial incidental drawback from a great good.

#### A NEW SCHOOL OF REFORM.

ON a former occasion, we described a little institution for reclaiming criminal and vagrant youth, founded by Mr Nash, the teacher of a ragged school in Westminster; and we took the opportunity of going into some general considerations connected with the subject.\* We have now to draw the attention of our readers to another institution of the same kind, then only glanced at in passing; but we shall confine ourselves to a delineation of the plan, and a notice of its results.

On the 10th of April 1848, among the mixed multitude which filled Trafalgar Square, there were, as there always are in large crowds, some of the young pick-pockets who infest our metropolis. To one of these, a youth of seventeen, is due the origin of the movement in question. This poor boy—for his case was really a pitiable one—had not taken to bad courses from any liking for them. His mother, a worthless woman, 'drove him out to steal.' She perhaps had been, in like manner, mistaught by her mother; and so up, from generation to generation. However this may have been, the result was, that the boy became a confirmed thief, and, as most persons would have supposed, a thoroughly bad character. He had been several times imprisoned, and had been whipped, with no effect but to harden him still more in vice. But on the evening of the day just mentioned, his mind was filled with unaccustomed thoughts. Perhaps the tumult had excited him. Perhaps some casual expression of an ardent orator had struck his ear, unaccustomed to

\* See 'An Evening in Westminster,' No. 427.

public speaking, and produced an effect which the orator himself had not expected. At all events, as the night closed in, the lad in melancholy humour quitted the square, and, with half-formed resolutions floating in his mind, took his way northward towards the New Road. In Brook Street, not far from the Regent's Park, there was a Ragged School, which he and some of his companions had occasionally attended. Sometimes they went to make a disturbance, and 'have a lark.' At other times, the patient kindness of the teacher made an impression on their not wholly callous hearts, and they remained to take part in the lessons. It was to this school that our young pickpocket now repaired, and opened his mind to the benevolent teacher. He was anxious, he said, to leave off his bad habits, and begin a new course. If he could only find a friend who would assist him, and get him something to do, he was willing to work, and to lead an honest life.

Mr Ellis, the teacher, pondered the subject in his mind. He had long been considering the question, how it happened that the frequent punishments of juvenile criminals in our prisons produced so little effect in reforming them. He had come to his own conclusions on this point, and an opportunity now seemed to offer for trying the effect of a different system. He spoke about the matter to the committee of gentlemen who supported the Ragged School. They hesitated at first, for their school-funds were small, and the prospect of reforming such hardened young reprobates did certainly not seem very bright. Mr Ellis, however, though himself but a poor hard-working bootmaker, undertook the entire management of this 'criminal class,' and the committee agreed to contribute towards their support. He began, in April 1848, with three boys—one of whom was our young thief, and the two others were lads of twelve and nineteen, the latter a lame, destitute boy. The manner in which he set about the work of reforming and instructing them was thus described by himself last year to a committee of the House of Commons:—'I thought that one cause of their crime was want of employment. They had never been used to work, and no one had ever taken them in hand to train them into the way of work. I employed them at shoemaking, and I made that employment of shoemaking as amusing to them as I possibly could; and I found that the boys were very fond of making things themselves, such as shoes. I used to go and sit with them for two or three hours a day, and I used to tell them that they might, by governing their tongue, and governing their tempers, and governing their appetites, and governing themselves generally, be much more happy if they would put themselves in harmony with the laws of their own physical nature; and I showed them how wrong it was to break the social laws that bind society together, and also the laws of God. I considered that my conversation with them for two or three hours had a great effect; and I provided them with wholesome food, and I gave them clothes to wear, and I surrounded them with as many comforts as I possibly could. My principal object always was to put in their power the means of getting a living, by teaching them a business. With respect to their morals, I thought I could not do better than set before them a good example; and I ate with them, and drank with them, and slept with them, and I associated myself with them, in every way; and as far as religion goes (I don't profess to be a religious teacher), I shewed them the law of the Gospel as well as I could.' In short, Mr Ellis was of opinion, that the boys had fallen into evil habits chiefly from the want of the training and example which they should have had from their parents; and his simple plan was just to supply this want, and act the part of a good and faithful parent to them. It is deserving of notice, that he was greatly aided in these efforts by his son, who, though only eight years old when the school commenced, was even

then remarkable for his strong moral feelings. He associated with the lads in the school, and allowed nothing wrong to be done in his presence.

The committee, at the end of six weeks, were so well satisfied with the result of the experiment, that on the 15th of May they added two more boys to the class. This was done at the urgent request of the first three, who begged for the admittance of their two comrades; and when they were told that the funds were very small, they said they were willing that their rations should be divided into five portions, in order that the other boys might share in the advantages that they were enjoying. The class gradually increased, until, on the 4th of December, the number amounted to fifteen. These youths, it must be understood, were not selected for their good qualities. On the contrary, they were nearly all genuine rogues of the very worst description. 'I have been on duty at Saffron Hill, at St Giles's, and at Westminster,' remarked a policeman confidentially to Mr Ellis, 'and I never knew a more determined set of thieves than those are that you have got with you.' And well he might say this, seeing that, remarkably enough, most of them had been chiefs of 'gangs.' It appears that the young thieves in London, and other large cities, carry on their depredations in regularly organised bands, comprising from half-a-dozen to as many as twenty-five lads in each. The captain of a gang is of course the most knowing and daring rogue in it. It seems surprising that boys of this character should have come voluntarily to place themselves under Mr Ellis's instruction; but intellect and force of character have always something in them which tends towards self-improvement. Mr Ellis remarked, that those who came to him with the worst characters, turned out to be his best pupils. 'I would sooner,' he observed, speaking on this point, 'take a courageous thief—I would sooner take a daring highway robber—than what we call these poor beggar-boys about the streets; for I find, generally, that they are lazy vagabonds, and that they have a wonderful knack of finding things before they are lost: they have not the courage to steal boldly. But give me mind, and I will be bound to convince the mind. If I could not convert the heart, I could alter the mind.' This, perhaps, was not an altogether philosophical way of speaking; but the worthy teacher evidently meant, that while a boy of feeble intellect must be slowly and patiently trained into good habits, an intelligent and resolute lad may be induced, by appeals to his reason, to make strong efforts for self-amendment. This was shewn in the conduct of the boys in this school. They voluntarily formed themselves into a sort of society, and made rules and established fines for the regulation of their own conduct. One of the penalties which they imposed was, that a portion should be stopped from the meals of those who infringed the regulations. They prohibited smoking and swearing, and required every one to be in clean trim on Sunday by nine o'clock. In fact, as far as possible, they were a self-controlled community.

This good result, however, was not brought about all at once. In some cases, it was a year before a new-comer was redeemed from his bad habits and dispositions, and became accustomed to the regular ways of the school, or rather of the household, for such it might properly be called. But all was done by patience and kindness. No punishment was ever inflicted by Mr Ellis. The only threat he ever had to use, was a warning, that if the misconduct were repeated, the boy should be expelled from the house; but this threat was always sufficient, and was never put in execution. All the boys, without exception, were reformed, and have turned out well. Mr Ellis's observation and experience had led him to disapprove of punishment as a means of reformation. He thought that the sacrifice made, and the mental pain experienced, in leaving off bad habits, which was like

cutting off the hand, or plucking out the eye, was a sufficient penalty for any offences. He had been led to believe that ordinary punishments, such as confinement and whipping, only hardened the culprits, and engendered in them a spirit of revenge, of hatred, and malice. An occurrence, which had strongly impressed this opinion on his mind, is thus related by him: 'My father was a soldier, and was flogged, now upwards of fifty years ago; and I have heard him speak of the effect that that punishment had upon him. As he was going over to the West Indies, as he crossed the Line, he received fifty lashes; and I have heard him say, that that created in him a feeling of dislike against the colonel who ordered that punishment, such as he could never forget; and although the colonel offered to make him a sergeant when they got to the West Indies, he refused it, and would not be friends with him. He was punished for damaging the king's stores; and a great many of these boys' crimes are analogous to that.' In other words, their transgressions do not proceed from wilfully bad intention, but from carelessness or ignorance.

The occasional waywardness or backsliding of his pupils was Mr Ellis's least difficulty. He had troubles at first from various other sources. The former companions of his boys were enraged when they found themselves deserted by their leading spirits. At first, he thought sometimes they would have pulled the house down. They came in a body, and carried away some of the lads from the school; but these soon found their way back, having learned by experience where they were best off; and at length they even succeeded in reforming some of their associates. After awhile, the street-boys ceased to molest those in the school, finding it impossible to draw them away. On the other hand, Mr Ellis's neighbours were strongly averse to his project, and tried, by warning and ridicule, to induce him to give it up. Even the city-missionary would have dissuaded him, believing that the attempt was a hopeless one. The inspector of police advised him, seriously and candidly, to abandon all hope of reforming the boys. He said that the police had done all they could for them; that they ought, every one of them, to be transported; and that it would be far better for Mr Ellis to mind his own business, and to leave them alone, as they would be sure to get themselves transported. As some of them had been in prison as many as six, seven, and even fourteen times, this prediction was fairly warranted, and, in the ordinary course of things, would have been fulfilled. But Mr Ellis was not to be daunted. His heart was in the work, and he determined to go on with it. When the committee of the Ragged School, owing to the lack of funds, could no longer assist him, he continued his undertaking entirely at his own expense. He heard that a certain strong-minded London alderman had declared that he would walk twenty miles to see a reformed thief; and this declaration of incredulity incited him to persevere. Another magistrate, of a different turn of thinking, came to the school, and spoke encouragingly, saying, that if it proved successful, he would call a meeting of the Middlesex magistrates, to establish schools in connection with prisons, so that the lads might be received into them as soon as they came out of prison. He kept his word; but the strong-minded alderman disapproved of the plan. He wanted more whipping, more prisons, more treadmills, and other such means of putting crime down; so he got a majority of three against the prison-school project, and put that down too.

Mr Ellis persevered, and had his reward in the complete success of his benevolent labours. His neighbours, who were at first so much opposed to his plans, changed their opinions as soon as they could see for themselves that these lads, who were once a disgrace and pest to society, had now become smart, industrious, well-conducted young men. Those who knew them formerly

could hardly believe that they were the same persons. Many individuals who had previously been hostile to the school, now became its friends; and courtesy and kindness took the place of the aversion and ridicule which it had at first to encounter. From another quarter Mr Ellis had still more gratifying testimony to his success, of which the following instance may be taken as a specimen. He once received into his school some boys belonging to a notorious family (whom we will designate Crew), residing in a certain court. In the same court were some honest poor persons, and one of them, Mrs Bland, the mother of seven children, came to Mr Ellis when he took these lads, and said with natural warmth: 'Mr Ellis, you have passed by my poor children, who never did anything wrong, and you have taken these vagabonds.' Mr Ellis could not, at the time, explain to Mrs Bland's satisfaction why he had done this; but some six months afterwards she came to him again and said: 'I see now the reason why you took Crew's children; and I am glad you did so.' She gave the reasons for this opinion, which were of a very satisfactory kind. Since he had taken those 'vagabonds' in charge, the court was not like the same place. Much of the drunkenness and rioting had ceased. They had formerly been a pest to the court. They had stolen the fruit of the poor apple-woman, and all other articles that they could lay their hands on. They had led other children into vice, and had given the court a bad name; and now these evils had been removed, and in the best possible way, by turning the mischievous vagabonds into honest and useful workmen.

Some cases may be mentioned, to shew how thoroughly Mr Ellis has succeeded in reforming the youths whom he has taken in charge. One of these was a lad who, at the age of seventeen, had been left by the death of his father, a publican, in possession of L.1700. This money he squandered in seven months. He then borrowed as much as he could of his sister; during eighteen months robbed everybody he could; was at last detected in robbing a pawnbroker of property to a large amount; was convicted, and transported to Gibraltar. After his return from that place, he was received into Mr Ellis's school. He is now living with a gentleman in London as coachman, and has been nearly two years in that situation, with great credit to himself, and to the school; is a teacher in the Ragged School; and is everything that could be wished. Another of the young men is now getting his living by wood-chopping; an excellent account has been received of him for honesty and industry. This youth had been in prison fourteen times, at the station-house thirty times, and admitted that he had committed twenty offences for every one in which he was detected. He has now so well established his character, that he can at any time borrow two or three pounds of a neighbour, in case of receiving a large order to execute. A third pupil is now getting his living, in a similarly independent and useful manner, by whitewashing; and a like good account is given of the whole number (fifteen) who, a year ago, had passed through Mr Ellis's school of reform.

Experience shews that any person who, with right motives, undertakes to do good, is pretty sure to do more than he intends or anticipates. So it happened in the case of Mr Ellis and his little seminary of reformed thieves. The reputation of the school gradually spread, until it reached a gentleman who had been led to take much interest in the painful subject of juvenile delinquency. This gentleman, Mr Power, recorder of Ipswich, came to London, visited the school, inquired minutely into its management, and on returning to Ipswich, established there a 'Dormitory and Industrial School,' of a similar character. The boys in this institution were mostly supplied from the jail, and were, of course, such as the police would at once pronounce to be incorrigible thieves and vagrants. The



school, however, soon developed the better elements which were in their nature. Like the Brook Street lads, 'they formed themselves into a little self-governing community; and one law which they made was, that not one of their companions should go to bed without saying his prayers; at one time they kept a little boy out of bed a considerable time, until he had followed the rule.' They made their own bedsteads, chairs, and tables; they helped to fit up the carpenter's shop. Indeed, from the first moment of their entering the establishment, until they quitted it, their interest was enlisted in the work; and everything that would develop self-control, and, so to speak, character in them, was sedulously attended to. Unfortunately, time was not given at Ipswich for carrying out the experiment fully, as, from the failure of the public subscriptions, the dormitory had to be given up. Out of the eight boys, however, who were in it, five have turned out well; one has gone back to bad courses; and of the other two, nothing certain is known. Of the first-mentioned five, one case, in particular, is worth describing. A sailor-boy, having been robbed of his money in a low house in London, turned tramp, and wandered about the country until he was committed by the Ipswich magistrates for vagrancy. After he came out of jail, he was taken into this institution, and while there became a most efficient teacher in the Ragged School which was attached to it. At length, by the assistance of one of the magistrates, he obtained a berth on board ship again. He has since been several voyages, and has given great satisfaction to his captain. He has written several times to the master of the school, expressing his determination, as soon as he can save sufficient for the purpose, to send some money for the support of the school, from which he himself feels conscious that he has derived so much benefit. Thus, by the mere accident of having been committed to the only jail in the kingdom, which had a dormitory and industrial school in its neighbourhood, this youth, naturally well disposed, was preserved from becoming a hardened criminal, and converted into a valuable member of society. We can now form some idea how rapidly the number of criminals would diminish if such asylums were formed in connection with all our prisons. Who can calculate the amount of evil which would have been prevented, if that strong-minded London alderman had not, with the best intentions, succeeded in putting down his brother-magistrate's prison-school project?

But the good effect of Mr Ellis's example was not to end here. Mr Power spoke of the school to his friend Mr Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham. It is not in the least astonishing that Mr Sturge should have been warmly interested in what he heard; that he should have visited Mr Ellis's school, and been delighted with what he saw in it; or that he should have determined immediately to establish a similar institution in Birmingham, and should have invited Mr Ellis to take charge of it. Neither are we surprised to learn, that the school thus set on foot, last summer, in Ryland Road, Birmingham, proved in a few months so successful, and excited so much interest, that several other benevolent gentlemen residing in Birmingham and its vicinity were induced to form themselves into a committee, for the purpose of establishing a reformatory institution on a more extensive plan, for the industrial education of criminal children and destitute juveniles. A public meeting to consider the subject was held at Dee's Hotel, in December last. Lord Calthorpe was in the chair; Lord Lyttelton, Mr Adderley, M.P., Mr Scholefield, M.P., Captain Tindal, R.N., and other gentlemen known for the attention which they have paid to these subjects, took part in the proceedings. A report was read, in which Mr Ellis's method was described, and his success in gaining the confidence of the children under his charge was

fully acknowledged. The report also pointed out, that other institutions for the reformation of juvenile criminals had been so successful, as to shew that a large amount of crime and misery might in this way be prevented. Thus, at Mettray, in France, 85 such youths in every 100 are completely reformed; and at the institution called the Rauhe Haus (or Rough Haus), in Hamburg, the proportion is even larger. Our own Philanthropic Society has been able to reform, at its farm-school at Red Hill, near Reigate, about 75 in every 100 of the young criminals whom it has taken in charge. With the knowledge of these and many other encouraging facts, the meeting decided that the institution should be undertaken. The funds, of course, had to be provided by voluntary contributions; but the amount required was lightened by the munificence of Mr Adderley, who offered to build at Saltley, near Birmingham, a house, with workshops and dormitories for twenty boys, and attach to it five acres of land, with space reserved for future additions. Mr Ellis is to be placed at the head of this establishment, which, there is reason to hope, will become the model of many similar institutions to be hereafter erected in the vicinity of our large towns. But even looking only at what has been done already, there is certainly ample encouragement to all reformers in considering how many unexpected benefits to society have flowed, in less than five years, from the worthy bootmaker's first act of practical kindness towards the penitent young pickpocket who sought his helping-hand in April 1848.

#### THE LOST MESSMATE.

WHEN we lived at Greenwich, long ago, the scene of my greatest earthly delight was the park, and my chosen society the supernannated seamen who strolled down there from Greenwich Hospital. Better company than some of them might have been found for a boy of thirteen, but in those days the sea filled my imagination. Readers, I am a respectable draper in the Blackfriars' Road, and the crossing of St George's Channel, in which I was terribly sick, has been the utmost limit of my voyages; but the interest now given to water-twist and fast-colours, then hung about double-reefed topsails, land on the lee-bow, and a strange craft bearing down. Great store was therefore set by the old mariners, who would talk and tell stories. Queer tales some of them had to tell, and few were slow to communicate; but the most satisfactory acquaintance I found among them, was Tom Patterson. Tom said he was the last man that ever lost an arm by Bonaparte. How he came to the exact knowledge of his own distinction in that respect, I never discovered, but his right arm had been carried off by a cannon-ball, in action with a French vessel, almost at the close of what it is to be hoped we shall long continue to call the 'last war.'

It is my belief, that Tom had come from Scotland in his day. His education was certainly better than that of foretop-men in general: he could read and write well; there were even traces of the Latin grammar about him; and at times Tom let out recollections of an old manse, which stood somewhere on the Firth of Clyde, and a wild, graceless lad, who ran away to sea. That part of the past was reserved for his memory's private domain. I cannot tell what ruins might be in it. Tom spoke little on the subject, and was never explicit; but if he had been the wild, graceless lad, there was a good work done by Time, the changer; for when I knew him he was a grave, quiet man, religious withal, after a discreet, sober fashion, and more thoughtful and

intelligent than the majority of Greenwich pensioners. Whether Tom patronised me or I him, is still an open question. Half at least of my pocket-money (and that fund was not large) went in good-will offerings of tobacco and pipes for his behoof and benefit; and he talked with me about ships and sea-adventures under the park's old chestnut-trees on summer evenings. Noble trees are they, those said chestnuts, with the circular benches round their roots, on which so many have rested. There is one, in particular, said to have been planted by Henry VII. soon after Bosworth Field had made him king of England. I go to see it yet sometimes, though not now to see Tom Patterson. His cruise on this side the stars has been long finished; but the bench below, overlooking the broad walk and the busy river, was the evening resort of my sailor-friend. On that seat, Tom appeared to me profoundly edifying, as he described the bombardment of Copenhagen, drew a parallel between Nelson and Collingwood (by the way, the latter was his crack-man), or explained how Acre was defended; but none of his historical essays ever made such an impression on my mind as a story he told me once, while we sat together in an April sunset. It was the Easter holidays, and Easter hadn't come early that year. The chestnut-trees were in full blossom, and the park in full green. Half London had come out, as usual, to trample it down; but the crowd was growing thin, for the sun was setting, and we sat on our accustomed seat, watching its diminution, when the great attraction of the day passed by. 'This was a Chinese—whether real or fictitious I know not; but he sold paper-lanterns, wore a loose cotton gown, a pair of flannel shoes, and an enormous pigtail. I was admiring that weapon of his warfare, and Tom, with the pipe between his teeth, watching him with a look of indefinite suspicion, till he was fairly out of sight, when the old man turned to me and said, in his own sedate fashion: 'Master Harry, I don't like them there Chinamen!'

'Why, Tom?' said I, having by this time picked up his prejudices. 'Are they as bad as the French?'

'They're worse, Master Harry, by several chalks,' said Tom. 'No Christian can ever be up to them. They're as deep as the South Sea, and I'll tell you what first made me think so. When I served on board the *Rattlesnake*, in 1809, our ship was ordered to the China Sea, where the pirates had grown brisk from the scarcity of cruisers. Our captain was a jewel for conduct and consideration, though maybe too young for such a command. Most of our officers had seen service; there wasn't a lubber in the crew, nor a troublesome soul on board but Dick Spanker. We gave him that surname unanimously—for Dick had none of his own that ever I knew—when he threw a somersault in the rigging off Formosa. Where he was born appeared to be a puzzle to himself. Sometimes he said he was a Yorkshire, and sometimes a Cornish man; but one thing was plain to everybody—Dick was no beauty. Low-set, strong, and square of build, he had a dark complexion, very red hair, and a nose broken out of all shape by some blow or accident; but the most remarkable particular about him, was an enormous right thumb. It was positively half the breadth of an ordinary hand; and just below the nail was a double x in deep blue. Dick said he put on that mark among the South-sea whalers, with whom such things are in fashion. A wild life it must be among far seas and savage isles; but Dick had spent years in it, and quite became his schooling. He swore hard, and drank harder when he got it; would have ventured on anything, with either tongue or hands; and was never known to keep out of a scrape or quarrel when he could get into one.

'I can't say that any of us liked Dick, for he had a raw nature—maybe there was a crack somewhere in

his brain; but we would have missed him as the odd man of the ship. With some sorts of captains, Dick would have had hard times—as it was, his grog was stopped now and then; but things went quietly on in our ship. The voyage out was prosperous. We never lost a man or saw an enemy. The Malays, too, had got wind of our coming, and kept well out of sight. Sail where we would, there was not a prow to be seen; but after beating about Fokien and Formosa for nearly a month, the East India Company's packet, *Maharajah*, from Canton to Madras, hailed us one morning; and her captain came aboard with a long story of something that had happened between the tea-merchants and the mandarins. It wasn't much of a matter either. The Chinamen wanted more bucksheesh than the merchants were willing to give; but our captain thought the sight of an English schooner in the river might help to settle things, so the helm was put about, and the *Rattlesnake* steered for Canton. After we dropped anchor in the river, the bucksheesh somehow became satisfactory. The tea-merchants and the mandarins grew good friends again; and the Chinamen came by scores about us, offering to sell everything, and do any work at all. Master Harry, it would take me a fortnight to tell you what rogues they were—how they cheated us in silks and tobacco, in pigs and in tea. The main-deck was never clear of a row while that trade lasted; but nobody dealt or squabbled more with the Chinamen than Dick Spanker.

'Dick bought everything while he had a fraction—Nankeen pantaloons, crape-cravats, tobacco-stoppers of sandal-wood, besides two fans, a scarlet shawl, and a set of small china, for a sweetheart he said he had at Deptford; of course, the Chinamen cheated him in every bargain, and the rows between them were terrible. Dick came across the discipline two or three times himself in consequence; and officers and men were glad when his money was done. By and by, we all began to wonder what made our captain lie so long in the river. Some said, it was to get a lot of uncommon grand crapes for his lady—a fine woman I'm told she was, living at Woolwich; some, that he was only on the look-out for shawls and tea-pots; and some, that the cards and dice were rather plenty at the Company's factory. The captain and most of our officers went there every day. Fine rooms they had, lined with china and looking-glasses, I can tell you. But we seamen were restricted to the boat-town, having a general order not to go on shore, on account of the Chinese laws against foreigners. There were forty thousand junks anchored in the river, in long lines, with streets of water between, through which the ships of all nations came and went. In these boats, all manner of trade and shop-keeping was carried on, and people had lived and died for I know not how many generations. However, there was nothing to be seen but eternal flocks of ducks, with dirty men and boys among them. Just think, Master Harry, what a dull spot it must be where a woman's face is never visible, though I'm sure I heard some of them scolding inside! That's done everywhere, you see; but it was our belief, that the boat-people were neither so smart at their work, nor so clever in cheating, as the men who came down from Canton.

'They told us such fine things about their town, that we grew tired of the river, particularly Dick, who latterly got in a manner wild for the shore, and used to grumble to himself by hours at the general order. Among the Canton-men there was one called Loo Chin, who dealt in all sorts of things, from pigs to porcelain; doing a little private trade in arrack and opium also. There was not a language heard at the port of Canton Loo Chin could not speak—English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese, besides the Malay and Tartar tongues. He boasted that his uncle was gate-keeper to the governor, and his brother the first player in the province; but I don't think a greater knave than himself came down the river. Loo

Chin was small, squat, and dirty: he had a pair of narrow slit-like eyes, whose very light was cunning; a pigtail that nearly touched the ground; and the blackest teeth I ever saw. That Chinaman had got Dick's last cash; but he didn't know it; and it was laughable to see him offering our messmate whatever nobody else would buy, at a price considerably raised for his special benefit. Many a furious squabble they had; but Loo Chin always came off safe, for when falsehoods failed him, he fell to flattery; and rough as Dick was, that smoothed him down. He praised his beauty and his manners, his riches and his generosity, always rising higher in the strain the more he intended to cheat, till Dick half believed him, but nevertheless reserved for his own entertainment the fact that his money was done, and none of our crew would spoil sport by mentioning it to the Chinaman. Loo Chin was by far the grandest describer of Canton and its wonders. He told us of a great fish-pond, with a tame dolphin in it; of a temple to their god of the wind, where holy hogs, with golden collars round their necks, were kept; and, above all, of his brother's playhouse.

'I had always remarked that Dick had a singular turn for play-going. There wasn't a single house of the kind in all England in whose galleries he had not been; and the establishment of Loo Chin's brother appeared to take his mind's-eye completely.

"Do you think one could get inside?" he inquired one day, when the Chinaman had been doing his best to sell him a yellow silk jacket full of holes, and describe the blue paint and gilding which decorated the said playhouse.

"Most sure," said Loo Chin, looking doubly cunning.

"Would one get safe back, I mean?" said Dick.

"With no doubt," said the Chinaman, bolting down the ship's side into his own trading-junk, on the bulwarks of which he balanced himself for a minute, made a queer motion with his yellow hands, as if to tie up something in a bundle, gave a short wicked laugh, and dived below among his goods. I meant to keep a watch on Loo Chin after that; but whether it was his ill success with the yellow jacket, or the coming of an American ship, that kept him from the *Rattlesnake*, we saw no more of the Chinaman. However, all hands were river-sick by this time, and a public meeting was held on the fore-castle, to petition Captain Paget for leave to go on shore. The boatswain's mate, who had been the son of a schoolmaster, and once saw his father sign a petition to parliament against the hearth-tax, drew up our memorial in the same form which he said was the thing furthest off mutiny, and commenced, "May it please your Honourable Cabin." Captain Paget favourably considered our petition, as he did all the complaints of his men; but to keep the Chinamen's minds at rest, we were allowed to go only in parties of a dozen strong, every man taking his turn, with strict orders not to lose sight of each other, and to return to the ship an hour before the shutting of Canton gates, which took place at sunset. We gave three cheers that astonished the boat-town, when the captain told us all that in a speech from the quarter-deck. The boatswain's mate said, if we had been in a Christian country, it should be printed in the newspapers; but the part that made most impression on us, was what the captain said in his wind-up—that he hoped we would justify the confidence our officers placed in us, by a prudent and orderly course of conduct, as became British seamen.

"The captain was not entirely mistaken in that hope. We took a general resolution to behave well: then Dick looked settled; and for some time, the parties came and went without disturbance, strict to orders, and punctual to time. We saw the Company's factory, and the governor's palace—at least the outsides of them—the narrow streets, the queer houses, and queerer shops of Canton. The Chinamen stared at us,

and called "Fanqui;" the children fled before, and the dogs barked after us; but our honour being concerned, not to speak of the going on shore, we took no notice.

'A party to which I belonged were getting the boat ready one day, and I was brushing my best jacket over the bulwark, when Dick Spanker came to me, and said: "Tom, can you lend me a few cash?"

'The Chinamen hadn't left me much, but I knew Dick was going with us, and might want a trifle; so, having some in my pocket (Master Harry, it was the only loan ever I regretted), I gave him the half, and we started. The day was spent, as usual, strolling through the town, and being called Fanquis. We bought water-melons and some arrack—not much, for all hands were sober. The time of return was drawing near, when we got into a new street, and saw a great wooden-house without windows, with a Chinaman at the door beating a little drum. As we came nearer, Dick knew him to be his old acquaintance, Loo Chin. "What sort of a pigeon is this you have got?" said he, running up to him (pigeon is the Chinaman's word for business).

"Calling people to the play," said Loo Chin.

"Is this your brother's playhouse then?" cried Dick.

"Be certain it is," said the Chinaman.

"Messmates, we'll all go in and see the play. When does it begin?"

"I don't know, and there's too many of you," said Loo Chin; and he fell to his drum faster than ever.

"Come along, Dick," said I, not liking the fellow's look; "it's time we were homeward bound."

'Dick did come; and we had got on a few steps, when, glancing back, I saw Loo Chin making signs to him. Just then, there came a great sound of gongs and bagpipes, which, they say, is the height of Chinese music, and down the street ran a crowd, making all sorts of noise for joy, because they were taking home a bride shut up in a covered chair like a great hoy, painted blue. We ranged ourselves along the wall, to let them pass quietly, and the capers they cut took my attention completely; but when all was over, and we had marched almost to the river, Dick Spanker was nowhere to be seen. We could not go to the ship without him, and a terrible search we had for the street. By the time it was found, the playhouse was as full as it could hold, with bands of men at the door—who drew knives and clubs, and roared at us as we tried to get in—but Loo Chin wasn't among them. If our cutlasses hadn't been left in the *Rattlesnake*, I'm not sure that the captain's orders to keep peace at all hazards would have been obeyed; but unarmed as we were, there was no chance. The crowd was thickening about us every minute, the bars with which they close the streets were getting ready; we called on Dick with all the strength of our voices, but got no answer; and as the gates would be shut in another minute, we had a strong run for it to our boat. Of course, the captain was told the moment we got on board. He sent the first-lieutenant up in the cutter by daybreak, to make a report to the governor. That great Chinaman promised that Dick would be inquired for throughout the province; but the end of all was, that nothing of our messmate was seen or heard of after.

'Captain Paget inquired, threatened, and demanded leave to search the playhouse; but the party he sent for that purpose—I was one of them—were taken to the street; shewn the spot where the house had stood; told that the players had taken it with them on their journey to the northern provinces, which they made once a year, all theatres in China being movable; and also that no stranger would be admitted to a Chinese playhouse. Loo Chin's whereabouts nobody knew; and the captain at length concluded that Dick had gone with him to see some bargain or other, got into a quarrel, and perhaps met with foul play. Gradually we all



became of that opinion; but no one cared for going on shore again; and as the time of the *Rattlesnake's* cruise shortly expired, we sailed home to Chatham. There it was found out that the ship wanted sundry repairs; her hands were accordingly drafted off to different vessels, and I, with some score of comrades, sent on board the *Thunderer*.

'There is no use in going over all that happened there; but the service wasn't so easy as it had been in the *Rattlesnake*—we had fighting in the Mediterranean, fever at Fernando Po, and a storm in the Western Pacific, that made us glad to run into Manila. The Spanish governor there held fast by King Ferdinand; and as England's armies were doing some tight work for him in Spain, Manila was a friendly port for an English vessel. I remember it was just three years since we sailed from Canton—actions, fevers, and drafts hadn't left one of the *Rattlesnake's* men on board the *Thunderer* but myself. The new messmates weren't quite up to the old; and though our captain was a good officer, he had a spice of pride in him that taunted the whole ship their distance. There were no meetings in the fore-castle, no petitioning of his Honourable Cabin, I can tell you; but going on shore was no trouble at Manila.

'It is a dirty town, and the worst part of it is the Chinese quarter. I had strolled in there one evening with three comrades, quiet smoking fellows, who knew the place, and would have me to see a Chinese play. I thought of the old story at Canton, but they said it was uncommon curious, and Chinamen abroad have no such hatred to strangers as at home. The playhouse stood in an unpaved street, narrow and very dark, with old Spanish houses, which the Chinese had got hold of, and set up their shops and trades in. It was like the one I had seen at Canton—wooden and windowless—but very full of the Chinamen, standing thick and close round a raised space in the middle, lighted by great torches, with a trap-door in it, by which all the wonders came up. I can't say what the play was about, though I and my comrades got places quite near the rail. There was a man with a tame lion; another with two serpents twined about his arms; and last of all, the glory of the house, a great dragon, which the Chinamen said could talk all the tongues in the world, and had been brought from Peking. It came up like a huge crocodile, only covered with a hairy skin. It had a long tail, a pair of fiery eyes that seemed far sunk in its head, and a mouth with great tusks in it. There was a boy on its back, and the performance consisted in his riding round the stage in a very gaudy dress, with a large China cup on his head, full of tea, of which a grain wasn't to be spilled. The dragon went round twice, and the cup kept steady, to the Chinamen's great delight; but, by way of gaining more applause, the boy began to strike it with a bamboo to hasten the motion. At the first blow, the creature stopped, and, to my amazement, began, in a smothered snuffling voice, to swear hard in good English. The boy struck it again, and it tried to throw him. He kept his seat wonderfully; but the dragon kicked and plunged, flinging its feet about, and trying to turn over. Strange paddles the feet were, covered with the same hairy skin to the toes; but somehow it had got split on one of them, and through the rent I saw, as the torch-light fell on it, a great thumb marked with a double x in blue below the nail. The next minute its rider had got the dragon hauled near enough the trap-door, and with some help from below, he rode it down. I didn't stay five seconds after in the house. My comrades laughed at my story; but I flew to the ship, craved to see our captain, and told him all about it. The proud, cold man bade me go to my duty, and he would inquire into the matter. Next morning, an officer did go on shore, but the Chinamen's governor said it was all a mistake, and sent a present of imperial tea to the

captain. We sailed for Acapulco three days after. The hands on board sometimes made jokes to themselves about the grog being too strong for me at Manila; but, Master Harry, I'll never believe that that swearing dragon was not my lost messmate!'

### COAL-MINE EXPLOSIONS.

Or the many Blue Books that have recently been laid before parliament, none is more full of matter for grave cogitation than that now to be referred to on coal-mine explosions.\* This Report, only one of a series, makes known, in a very emphatic way, the terrible loss of life in coal-mines; one fact alone being sufficiently appalling—the loss of 900 lives by mine-explosions within the short space of twenty-one weeks, in the year 1852.

All reports on this subject of serious concern concur in stating, that for explosions the only proper remedy is better ventilation; and they all deprecate placing too great reliance on the safety-lamp. They affirm, that while many accidents are traceable solely to the use of this instrument, it is perfectly compatible with science to reduce these melancholy occurrences to a small fraction of their present number, and that, ultimately, mines may be rendered perfectly safe. Little good, however, can be done while operative miners entertain an undue, and what may be called a superstitious confidence in their Davy-lamp, no matter how much that lamp may be out of order. With them, this useful companion is not so much a delicate scientific instrument, as a thing of talismanic power. Danger may be most imminent—the lamp completely out of trim—but all is right, provided the miner has *only* a Davy. Stories, most ludicrous but for their associations, are told in abundance respecting this childlike simplicity. We select two. The first was brought out in evidence at the investigation of an explosion which happened last year in Staffordshire. It there appeared that the fireman, who ought to have examined the safety of the workings ere the miners entered, had, on the morning of the accident, deputed this duty to another person. The deputy went round with a lamp not closed, and was seen going into the workings closely followed by some men and boys, each with a *lighted candle* in his hand! Again, T. E. Forster, Esq., an extensive viewer, relates, that last year he visited a pit in Lancashire. 'On going down, the overlooker told me: "We work this mine entirely with safety-lamps." I said: "Very well, Jonathan. I should like to see these lamps, that they are all right before I go in." The first lamp he put in my hand was Clanny's, and between the gauze I could put my little-finger in. I said: "This will not do; I will take one of the others." I examined one, and the gauze was perfect, but very dirty. We proceeded along the railway from the bottom of the shaft. And in the face of the workings every man had a Davy-lamp; but every man had the gauze out, and it was a naked light! I said: "If you are not more particular than this, you will have a blow-up." And next week they had it.' So much for mere carelessness; but we shall by and by advance more serious charges against the lamp. Meanwhile, as to know the disease is half the cure, let us look for a moment at the dread agent of destruction.

The reader who takes his idea of a gas from the ordinary illuminating medium of our streets, will, in studying *fire-damp*, find himself not very far off the mark. Relieved from the pressure of the superincumbent strata, light carburetted hydrogen exudes in great abundance, often from almost every pore of the coal in our mines; and on examining our gas-works, we find

\* Report on Coal-mines. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 22d June 1852.



ingenious machinery to separate and convey away the tar, ammonia, and the other chemical products of the distillation of coal from the carburetted hydrogens, the only useful ingredients for the purposes of light and heat. If so, why do we not hear of catastrophes in our streets and parlours similar to those so much dreaded underground? The reason is simple. Ask any chemist, and he will tell you, that the danger lies not in any property of the gas or gases themselves, but only when they are combined in certain proportions with the oxygen of atmospheric air. Every housewife knows, that if our ordinary coal-gas be allowed not to burn, but to escape into the atmospheric air, an explosion will follow the introduction of a light into the room, rivalling only in degree the dread catastrophes of the mines.

Though, from its small specific gravity, light carburetted hydrogen easily escapes into the atmosphere, the coal still retains a large portion of it; and this has been amply proved by experiments of a most painful nature. Even coal-ships at sea have been the scenes of these demonstrations. For instance:—‘On the 5th August 1816, the ship *Flora*, of London, having just taken a cargo of coal on board in Sunderland harbour, blew up with a terrible explosion; the deck-beams were broken, and the decks torn up. On the 4th July 1817, the *Fly*, of Ely, lying at Brandling-staith, on the Tyne, with a cargo of coal just taken in, the gas from it exploded, burned the captain in the cabin, tore up part of the deck, threw a boat from the hatches, and did other serious damage. Upon the 21st July 1839, the sloop *Enterprise*, when at sea, with coal, from Pembroke to Newport, Isle of Wight, had an alarming explosion, which fortunately only frightened, but did not injure the crew. And the schooner *Mermaid*, of Guernsey, upon the 29th August, this year (1842), lying at South Shields, sustained an explosion; she had been laden that day with Hilda coal, and the hatches immediately battened down, when, six hours after, the gas from the coal exploded at the fore-castle-lamp: one man was knocked down, and much burned in the face, another injured, the mate struck down in the cabin, and a hatch started.’

It is very remarkable, that it is only with a certain quantity of atmospheric air the fire-damp explodes; *minus* or *plus* that quantity, and the danger vanishes. In three or four parts of atmospheric air to one of carburetted hydrogen, there is a slight explosion; but the most terrible calamities happen when the mixture is seven parts of carburetted hydrogen to one of atmospheric air. The margin of explosive quantity appears to be from about five to thirteen; above or below these points, and there is no explosion. Hence we see the necessity for a thorough ventilation in mines; for any system by which an imperfect quantity of air is diffused, so far from diminishing, only increases the danger. Another striking anomaly is, that, dreadful and terrible as the explosion itself is, it is only the means for the elimination of an agent of destruction still more fatal. The miner may not have suffered the mechanical violence of the explosion, but frequently he escapes only to die placidly and surely by the fatal after-damp. A principal ingredient is the deadly poison, carbonic acid; and so fatal is it, the committee inform us, that it was stated in evidence, that 70 per cent. of the deaths from explosions were occasioned by this after-damp. So speedy is its action, that Mr Mather, about two years ago, entering a pit where it preponderated, was taken out insensible in a few minutes. He says: ‘You are struck down, and you scarcely know how or why; you naturally sink down asleep.’ Those who have suffered from its influence may easily be known from those who have died by the explosion; as is shewn in the following extract, which likewise proves that dangers, perils, and heroisms are not confined to battle-fields or to the raging deep. It relates to the explosion

of the St Hilda pit, in 1839:—‘The deadly gas, the resulting product, became stronger and stronger as we approached. We encountered in one place the bodies of five men who had died from the effects of the gas, and had apparently died placidly, without one muscle of the face distorted. Then there were three more that had been destroyed by the explosion; clothes burned and torn, the hair singed off, the skin and flesh torn away in several places, with an expression as if the spirit had passed away in agony. Going with a single guide, we encountered two men, one with a light, the other bearing something on his shoulders. It was a blackened mass—a poor dead burned boy he was taking out. A little further on, we found wagons that had been loaded, overturned, bottom upwards, scattered in different directions; a horse lying dead, directly in the passage, with his head turned over his shoulder, as if, in falling, he had made a last effort to escape: he was swollen in an extraordinary manner. At one point, in another passage, we suddenly came amongst twelve or fifteen men, who, striving to reach the places where bodies or survivors might be found, had been driven back by the surcharged atmosphere of this vast common grave; their lamps were burning dim and sickly, with a dying red light, glimmering as if through a fog.’

How, then, are these dread casualties to be prevented? Firstly, the miner has been furnished with a lamp, with the flame so shielded that it cannot come in contact with the dangerous atmosphere; secondly, the foul air has been swept away by ventilation; and lastly, it has been proposed chemically to decompose the noxious gases, and thus prevent explosion. Of the two first methods, we shall immediately speak; of the last, suffice it to say, that although Mr Birkmore has offered through the Royal College of Chemistry, a premium of £1000 for the discovery of some simple practical means by which the explosive gases may be decomposed or neutralised, still science has as yet been unable to obtain this desirable object.

Many safety-lamps have been proposed, but, as our readers know, the favourite has been that of Sir Humphry Davy. Some practical miners, indeed, prefer the lamps of Dr Clanny and of Stephenson; but as these are used in but few collieries, we will confine our remarks to the Davy-lamp. Its illustrious author, after a visit to the Newcastle coal-mines in 1815, began a series of beautiful experiments on the properties and structure of flame. From these he was led to conclude, that it could not pass through minute metallic tubes, and therefore wire-gauze, consisting of a congeries of these tubes, was a safe prison wherein to confine it: a miner, therefore, with a lamp whose flame was thus separated from the explosive atmosphere, could pursue his avocation in perfect safety. In every chemical handbook there are noted many striking experiments regarding this peculiar property of wire-gauze; and in the new calorific-engine, the heated air is cooled and conducted into the regenerator by means of this substance. Nothing can be more beautiful in theory than Sir Humphry's instrument, and in the laboratory or the lecture-room it truly seems perfect. All praise and honour to the intellect that laboured so well for the service of humanity; and let the commendations of the many it has saved from destruction, and the many more it has redeemed from penury, be the everlasting monument of their noble benefactor! But let us beware of even scientific idolatry. And let us not take for perfect, that which even its inventor pronounced in some degree faulty. Be it always remembered, that the mine presents conditions often totally different from those of the quiet laboratory of the chemist. In a still atmosphere, radiation will destroy the flame ere it has time to pass through the wire-gauze. But should there be also a current of air at the time, its operation may be counterbalanced,

and there is then no security. Moreover, particles of carbon, oil, dust, sulphur, are always floating about the mines, and lodge themselves on the Davy-lamps. The wire-gauze, then, red hot, and the lamp in such a state, explosion is almost inevitable. So dirty are the lamps often, after being brought up from work, that one of the witnesses says, 'no practical man would go into an explosive mixture with them.' This being the case, we can well sympathise with another witness, who thinks 'it a safe lamp in cautious hands, but lately I have got a little nervous about it.'

Were miners to receive proper instruction as to the nature and properties of the dangerous gases they constantly inspire—did they possess a staid, scientific deportment, instead of their noted recklessness, then we might trust them with this delicate scientific instrument. But all these they deplorably want. As it is, we must therefore believe with the committee, that 'under circumstances of excitement, when danger is threatened, it is not improbably, far oftener than imagined, the very cause of the explosion which it was intended to prevent.' Many instances are on record, where the explosion was alone traceable to the Davy. It was so at Wallsend, where, in 1835, 102 people were killed. For two days previous, they were working under red-hot lamps, the flame filling them to the top; and when these were afterwards examined by the coroner, they were found to be perfect—only, as if they had been intensely hot, and 'had been passed through a smith's fire.' The lamps found after the explosion at Haswell Mine, where 95 people were killed in 1846, were in a precisely similar state, and the catastrophe could be traced to no other source; as were also several similar, though smaller, accidents happening only last year. Besides all this, we find that while, during the twenty years previous to the introduction of the Davy-lamp, 679 lives were lost, the number was increased to 744; thus leaving a balance against the safety-lamp of 65 lives. This may be accounted for by the increased extent of works, and greater number of mines; but every witness concurred in stating, that the recent fearful increase of accidents could not be thus explained.

Who can wonder, then, at the general adoption of the opinion, that to get rid of the gas altogether is preferable to guarding against it? The evidence now before us testifies, that however our leading mining engineers and capitalists may differ as to the method, they all consider ventilation as the sheet-anchor of the safety of the mines. The committee whose labours we have been considering, have principally occupied themselves in investigating the merits of the two rival systems of ventilation—the furnace and the steam-jet: we have not now the space, even had we the inclination, to follow them in their inquiries; suffice it to say, that while the furnace acts by rarefaction, the steam-jet acts in a strictly mechanical manner, propelling the air before it through the mine, like the piston of a steam-engine in the cylinder. The committee state that—'The furnace-system, under favourable circumstances—that is, of the area of the shafts being large and deep, the air-courses sufficient, the goaves (or old workings) well insulated, and the mine not very fiery—appears to be capable, with strict attention, of producing a current of air that will afford reasonable security from explosion; but when the workings are fiery and numerous, as well as remote, and the intensity of the furnace or furnaces requires to be raised, in order to increase, in any particular emergency, the amount of ventilation, then the furnace not only refuses to answer the spur and to increase ventilation, but from a natural law (discovered by Mr Gurney, and scientifically and practically confirmed before your committee) there arises a dangerous stoppage to the ventilation going on throughout the mine. . . . Your committee are

unanimously of opinion, that the steam-jet is the most powerful, and at the same time least expensive method of ventilation for the mines. Previous to 1848, when Mr Forster introduced the steam-jet into the Seaton Delaval Mine, the fire-damp was constantly seen playing around the face and edges of the goaves and other parts of the workings. Since that period, the mine is swept so clean, that it is never observed, and all danger of explosion seems removed in a very fiery mine. The increase of ventilation is from 53,000 cubic feet per minute under the furnace-system, to 84,000 under the steam-jet; and to double that quantity, which Mr Forster considers sufficient, would, he says, only require the application of some extra jets. Mr Forster states the original outlay for the steam-jet to be less than for the furnace by L.39, 15s. 6d.; and the annual cost to be less by L.50, 12s. 1d.; while the power of ventilation is increased nearly double.'

Additional inspectors, increased power vested in them, a central board of control, mining-schools, a special coroner, a preliminary examination of managers and overmen, and the other topics touched on, all invite comment, but we forbear; and that the more willingly, since Lord Palmerston has stated that he may perhaps be able, this session, to introduce a bill on the subject. Let us hope that he may do so, and that a little time will be spared from polemical discussions and devoted to the cause of practical humanity.

#### POETRY OF WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

We suspect that the poetry of Mr Landor is very little known to general readers; and that, even among the studious and most cultivated classes of his countrymen, there are few who can be said to be thoroughly acquainted with it. We remember De Quincey saying, that for many years he believed he was the only man in England who had read *Gebir*; and that, after some inquiry among his friends, he found Southey to be the only other person who had accomplished the same feat. To say the truth, it is not an easy matter to get through *Gebir*; and perhaps it is still more difficult, even after a deliberate perusal, to give an intelligible account of its meaning and intention. A dim and misty fable, wherein the supernatural is inconspicuously mingled with the natural, and brief glimmerings of poetry alternate with heavy passages of vague description and turgidity—the work presents next to no attractions on the surface, and, with the most laborious efforts to understand it, yields at the utmost but inadequate results. We cannot recommend *Gebir* to anybody as a pleasant entertainment, but we are still prepared to say, that none but a man of genius could have written it. It has an undoubted originality, which, while it gives no attraction to the poem, proves the author to be at least a man of power. The great defect is a certain crudeness of the judgment, implied in the selection of the subject-matter, and a further want of skill and perspicuity in the treatment. *Gebir* possesses some interest as a poetical curiosity, but, except in a few passages, it has none of those peculiar graces of style and sentiment which render the writings of our more prominent modern authors so generally delightful. Such passages as we speak of can never convey any accurate notion of a poem, but, as illustrations of the poetic faculty of the writer, they may, in such a case as Mr Landor's, be easily detached and cited, without occasioning either misapprehension of his genius, or injury to his reputation. One or two we shall here accordingly present, by way of shewing the kind of gems which, at wide intervals, are imbedded in the otherwise dark and dreary caves of *Gebir*. Let us begin with some lines containing an image which Wordsworth afterwards expanded, in a famous passage

of the *Excursion*. A river-nymph is described as saying to a shepherd :

'I have sinuous shells of pearly hue  
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed  
In the sun's palace-porch, where, when unyoked,  
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave :  
Shake one, and it awakens, then apply  
Its polished lips to your attentive ear,  
And it remembers its august abodes,  
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.'

Readers of Wordsworth will remember the lines beginning—'I have seen a curious child,' &c., and notice their resemblance to the above. Among other striking and extractable passages, the following has seemed to us deserving of quotation. It will be seen that it expresses a pagan sentiment on the holiness and efficacy of prayer :—

For earth contains no nation where abounds  
The generous horse and not the warlike man.  
But neither soldier now nor steed avails,  
Nor steed nor soldier can oppose the gods,  
Nor is there aught above like Jove himself,  
Nor weighs against his purpose, when once fixed,  
Aught but, with supplicating knee, the prayers.  
Swifter than light are they, and every face,  
Though different, glows with beauty; at the throne  
Of mercy, when clouds shut it from mankind,  
They fall bare-bosomed, and indignant Jove  
Drops at the soothing sweetness of their voice  
The thunder from his hand.

Stray lines of pithy sense and wisdom are frequently occurring in the poem. Thus, of brave men it is said :—

The brave,  
When they no longer doubt, no longer fear.

Again, in regard to the lessons of experience, we have this—

From our own wisdom less is to be reaped  
Than from the barest folly of our friend.

In the way of description, in which Mr Landon is sometimes, but not always happy, the following representation of an Eastern morning displays a rich and pleasing fancy :—

Now to Aurora, borne by dappled steeds,  
The sacred gate of Orient pearl and gold,  
Smitten with Lucifer's light silver wand,  
Expanded slow to strains of harmony ;  
The waves beneath, in purpling rows, like doves  
Glancing with wanton coyness tow'rd their queen,  
Heaved softly ; thus the damsel's bosom heaves  
When from her sleepy lover's downy cheek,  
To which so warily her own she brings  
Each moment nearer, she perceives the warmth  
Of coming kisses fanned by playful dreams.  
Ocean and earth and heaven was jubilee,  
For 'twas the morning pointed out by Fate,  
When an immortal maid and mortal man  
Should share each other's nature knit in bliss.

*Gebir* is a sort of epic, in seven books, and is luckily the only long poem which Mr Landon seems to have attempted. Without offence to him, or to anybody else, we think it may be said, that there is no description of poetry for which his talent is so unsuited. In dramatic writing, he has succeeded better, though he has given us nothing that can be properly styled a drama ; indeed, he calls his pieces of this sort simply 'acts and scenes ;' and informs us, that although in a dramatic form, they 'were never offered to the stage, being no better than *Imaginary Conversations* in metre.' As such they are not by any means uninteresting, though they mostly refer to scenes and circumstances so remote from the studies of the general reader as to offer few attractions to him ; and, except here and there in pointed thoughts and fine expressions, they manifest no extraordinary ability. It is chiefly in his

collection of Miscellaneous Pieces—short occasional poems, written to express some fitting thought or pensive fancy—that Mr Landon is likely to find any considerable body of readers. Many of these pieces are purely personal, but are not on that account deficient either in grace or sterling excellence. As it is the vocation of the poet to reflect the mental states of other men, and be the interpreter of their aspirations and emotions, whatsoever affects, interests, or perplexes him, will serve in the representation to excite the sympathies, and more perfectly express the sense of all who anyway partake of kindred thoughts and feelings. So considered, these brief and unpretending poems of Mr Landon seem to be calculated to impart a fine intellectual pleasure, and yield matter for meditation in moments when the heart is inclined to be still and commune with itself. The merit of this poetry lies mainly in its tone of calm reflectiveness, in a certain suggestive power which sets the mind of the reader thinking, and engages him for the time in the serious contemplation of some striking and peculiar view of human life. Such pieces as we have selected for quotation may be not unsuitably introduced by the following lines on the outlooks of middle-age :—

When we have panted past life's middle space,  
And stand and breathe a moment from the race,  
These graver thoughts the heaving breast annoy :  
'Of all our fields, how very few are green !  
And ah ! what brakes, moors, quagmires, lie between  
Tired age and childhood ramping wild with joy.'

It will be seen that, in this little poem, there is nothing gorgeous or particularly felicitous in the language—not a word of imagery or sentimental softness—yet the thought is eminently poetical, and simply as it is set forth, suggests a great deal more than is expressed—the whole throng of cares and pent-up sadness which the tried and weary soul conceals, even while they press on him as the inner burden of his life. Our next extract is of a more imaginative aspect, and shews how admirable a picture the author can delineate in words. One seems to see the majestically-attired Evening moving slowly over the landscape, and covering all things as she advances with the folds of her misty drapery :—

From yonder wood mark blue-eyed Eve proceed :  
First through the deep and warm and secret glens,  
Through the pale-glimmering privet-scented lane,  
And through those alders by the river-side :  
Now the soft dust impedes her, which the sheep  
Have hollowed out beneath their hawthorn shade.  
But ah ! look yonder ! see a misty tide  
Rise up the hill, lay low the frowning grove,  
Enwrap the gay white mansion, sap its sides,  
Until they sink and melt away like chalk ;  
Now it comes down against our village-tower,  
Covers its base, floats o'er its arches, tears  
The clinging ivy from the battlements,  
Mingles in broad embrace the obdurate stone  
(All one vast ocean), and goes swelling on  
In slow and silent, dim and deepening waves.

We quote next a somewhat longer poem, wherein the influences of wrath and gentleness are very beautifully contrasted :—

Look thou yonder, look and tremble,  
Thou whose passion swells so high ;  
See those ruins that resemble  
Flocks of camels as they lie.  
'Twas a fair but froward city,  
Bidding tribes and chiefs obey,  
Till he came who, deaf to pity,  
Tost the imploring arm away.  
Spoiled and prostrate, she lamented  
What her pride and folly wrought :  
But was ever Pride contented,  
Or would Folly e'er be taught ?



Strong are cities; Rage o'erthrows 'em;  
 Rage o'erwhelms the gallant ship;  
 Stains it not the cloud-white bosom,  
 Flaws it not the ruby lip?  
 All that shields us, all that charms us,  
 Brow of ivory, tower of stone,  
 Yield to Wrath; another's harms us,  
 But we perish by our own.  
 Night may send to rave and ravage  
 Panther and hyena fell;  
 But their manners, harsh and savage,  
 Little suit the mild gazelle.  
 When the waves of life surround thee,  
 Quenching oft the light of love—  
 When the clouds of doubt confound thee,  
 Drive not from thy breast the dove.

The following, as the reader will perceive, contains a consoling and excellent suggestion in regard to the transitoriness of earthly sorrows:—

The wisest of us all, when woe  
 Darkens our narrow path below,  
 Are childish to the last degree,  
 And think what *is* must always be.  
 It rains, and there is gloom around,  
 Slippery and sullen is the ground,  
 And slow the step; within our sight  
 Nothing is cheerful, nothing bright.  
 Meanwhile the sun on high, although  
 We will not think it can be so,  
 Is shining at this very hour  
 In all his glory, all his power,  
 And when the cloud is past, again  
 Will dry up every drop of rain.

From another point of view, it is shewn how the most brilliant spirits are the most susceptible of suffering and depression:—

The brightest mind, when sorrow sweeps across,  
 Becomes the gloomiest; so the stream, that ran  
 Clear as the light of heaven ere autumn closed,  
 When wintry storm and snow and sleet descend,  
 Is darker than the mountain or the moor.

In the next quotation, the reader will get a glimpse of Mr Landor's views concerning the poetic art:—

Pleasant it is to wink and sniff the fumes  
 The little dainty poet blows for us,  
 Kneeling in his soft cushion at the hearth,  
 And patted on the head by passing maids,  
 Who would discourage him? who bid him off?  
 Invidious or morose! Enough, to say  
 (Perhaps too much, unless 'tis mildly said)  
 That slender twigs send forth the fiercest flame,  
 Not without noise, but ashes soon succeed;  
 While the broad chump leans back against the stones,  
 Strong with internal fire, sedately breathed,  
 And heats the chamber round from morn till night.

Some further ideas on this subject are presented to us in some lines addressed to Southey, between whom and Mr Landor, notwithstanding the widest difference in their political and social views, there existed a close and uninterrupted friendship. A good deal of sound criticism is here condensed into a small compass. Pope's celebrated Essay contains nothing of equal merit, either in point of judgment or in the graces of expression:—

There are who teach us that the depths of thought  
 Engulf the poet; that irregular  
 Is every greater one. Go, Southey, mount  
 Up to these teachers; ask, submissively,  
 Who so proportioned as the lord of day?  
 Yet mortals see his steadfast, stately course,  
 And lower their eyes before him. Fools gaze up  
 Amazed at daring flights. Does Homer soar  
 As hawks and kites and weaker swallows do?  
 He knows the swimherd; he plants apple-trees  
 Amid Alcinous's cypresses;  
 He covers with his aged, black-veined hand,

The plummy crest that frightened and made cling  
 To its fond mother the ill-fated child;  
 He walks along Olympus with the gods,  
 Complacently and calmly, as along  
 The sands where Simois glides into the sea.  
 They who step high and swing their arms soon tire.  
*The glorious Theban then?*

The sage from Thebes,  
 Who sang his wisdom when the strife of cars  
 And combatants had paused, deserves more praise  
 Than this untrue one, fitter for the weak,  
 Who by the lightest breezes are borne up,  
 And with the dust and straws are swept away;  
 Who fancy they are carried far aloft,  
 When nothing quite distinctly they descry,  
 Having lost all self-guidance. But strong men  
 Are strongest with their feet upon the ground.  
 Light-bodied Fancy—Fancy, plover-winged,  
 Draws some away from culture to dry downs,  
 Where none but insects find their nutriment;  
 There let us leave them to their sleep and dreams.

Great is that poet—great is he alone,  
 Who rises o'er the creatures of the earth,  
 Yet only where his eye may well discern  
 The various movements of the human heart,  
 And how each mortal differs from the rest.  
 Although he struggle hard with poverty,  
 He dares assert his just prerogative  
 To stand above all perishable things,  
 Proclaiming *this* shall live, and *this* shall die.

From these extracts, the character of Mr Landor's minor poems will be partially perceived; readers hitherto unacquainted with them must now consider for themselves, whether they possess attractions of a kind likely to be acceptable to their particular tastes and temperaments. It will be seen that the poetry is mostly of a contemplative cast; not remarkably imaginative, nor imbued to any great degree with the graces or charms of fancy; nowise stately or magnificent in diction, or particularly polished or exquisite in style; but, in modest and simple guise, wisely thoughtful and reflective; full of hints and intimations of a peculiar experience, and rich in that quiet wisdom which a man of fine gifts and extensive knowledge has constantly in store, and the utterance of which is to him as natural and easy as is the delivery of commonplaces to ordinary persons. No one can read these poems without observing their unelaborate and simple structure. They have all the air of spontaneous effusions. They seem to be the little sparks of light which the revolving mind casts off in token of a latent heat which cannot be contained or all concentrated in that subtle and vast activity, whose product in other forms of literature has been so admirable and magnificent. They have taken shape without premeditation and without labour, and have the appearance of being almost involuntary utterances. Indeed, they might have been in some instances improved by a little more care and manual painstaking in the versification; but for this mechanical excellence Mr Landor appears to have no regard. He says once, in addressing Wordsworth:

That other men should work for me  
 In the rich mines of Poesie,  
 Pleases me better than the toil  
 Of smoothing under hardened hand  
 With attic emery and oil  
 The shining point for wisdom's wand.

Accordingly, what poetry he is in the habit of writing, he throws off from him with an easy carelessness, satisfied if the words and images he uses be such as will just serve as a body to the thought which it is his purpose to express. It is always rather the substance than the form which constitutes the merit of these productions; and though they cannot be said to present any very lofty views of human life and destiny, any grand conceptions of man's relations and vocation in

the universe, they yet contain many excellent and consolatory reflections, many just and pure sentiments, much of that solemn and pensive beauty which, like the rays of moonlight about ruins and lonely places, gives a charm and a quiet glory to the sobered sadness that haunts the chambers of a soul deeply learned in manifold experiences. One suggestion may be given as to what seems the proper way of reading them: they yield most pleasure when perused deliberately, one at a time, following out the thought with its various suggestiveness, until its full meaning is gathered up and taken in. They will, most of them, be found to have a wonderful completeness, and each of them a separate and definite signification. They are not endless repetitions of a few fixed ideas and feelings, but they express a multitude of intellectual and emotional conditions: they are records of all the moods and phases which the author's mind has undergone, in the course of a life now considerably advanced, and bear witness to his large devotion to the interests of truth and beauty. For all men anyway like-minded, they cannot fail to prove pleasant and congenial reading; and to such of these as may not yet have been attracted to them, we here take the opportunity of recommending them. We hold them to be worthy of careful and deliberate study, and can testify that a prolonged acquaintance with them increases the gratification which they are calculated to afford.

#### THE GIVING BEE.

AMONG some of the pleasantest of my reminiscences of New York state, is that of a few months' sojourn on the banks of the Croton River, the stream which supplies the great metropolis of the Union with the means of cleanliness it so much requires. The country around my residence was wild, mountainous, woody, and haunted by half-forgotten tales of love and war—traditions of the struggle between the royalist and the patriot. On one hill-side, deep in the woods, was still to be seen 'Old Sarah's Cave,' where for upwards of forty years the half-crazed victim of an unhappy passion had expiated her follies and sins in solitude and suffering. The old people of the neighbouring town of Salem loved to tell how they remembered her coming, Sabbath after Sabbath, to their church, and how, being missed one day from her accustomed place in the middle aisle, she was sought at her dreary home, and found there dead. In a cottage, too, quite near us, dwelt a descendant of one of the three captors of poor André; and here and there, among the surrounding villages, the gray and tottering ruin of many a revolutionary hero still existed to reward the search of the curious. It was, indeed, quite romantic ground for the New World.

The 'ville,' on the outskirts of which we lived, had risen in a pleasant spot; straggling along the left bank of the rapid and stony-bedded river, and sheltered from the cold winter blast and the sultry summer sun by mountains wooded to their summits. At one corner of the single street, shaded by majestic sycamores, stood the smithy, that, in all lands, most picturesque of workshops; a little beyond, the 'store' claimed attention—the coach-office, post-office, and gossiping place of the neighbourhood. The mill clacked and rumbled on the opposite side, and then followed a few pretty white houses occupied by humble mechanics and labourers, of which the fringed window-curtains and precise neatness of exterior gave evidence that the inmates resembled, in some respects at least, their near neighbours—the good folks of Connecticut. A neat church, in summer almost hidden by the lofty locust-trees that grew around it, and only separated from the minister's dwelling by his garden and orchard, terminated the village street; beyond it began the heavy white limestone walls that in this part of Westchester county are

frequently used, instead of rail-fences, to divide the corn-fields and meadows, and which, with the ugly red barns and outhouses of the farms scattered on the hills around, were far from improving the charm of the landscape.

Both the owners of the comfortable homesteads, and the poorer inhabitants of the ville, were a simple, unsophisticated race, sociable, and primitively hospitable. Many were the moonlight tea-drinkings, and quilting-frolics, and Dorcas-meetings at which I assisted, in company with Mrs Jones, the miller's wife, and her gossip, the blacksmith's better-half. But of all the village-gatherings, the Giving Bee gave me the most pleasure, and has remained the most interesting recollection of my visit.

Our minister—a man he was to all the country dear—was 'hired,' as the native expression is, at a salary of 200 dollars a year, and a house, garden, orchard, and pasture for his horse and cow. He added somewhat to his income by preaching every other Sunday afternoon at Salem, seven miles off, and by instructing half-a-dozen children in branches of education not taught at the district-school. The flock, however, did not consider their pastor yet sufficiently remunerated, and therefore held an annual 'bee,' as an assembly for any kind of work is sometimes termed in the States, to supply him and his family with a portion of their yearly necessities.

It was rather late in the afternoon of the day appointed by the elders—it was a Presbyterian community—that I started with my offering for the minister's dwelling. The December day was dying, the Croton shut up beneath ice two feet thick, and the ground covered deep with snow; but the air was so still and clear, that the cold was far from being unpleasantly severe, and the rapid motion of the sleigh so exhilarating, that the drive was delightful. The ville presented a gay scene: vehicles of every shape and size, mounted on runners, drawn by horses decked profusely with tinkling bells, and laden with noisy parties from the farms, and stores of good things, were rushing in swift succession towards the place of meeting; while grouped beneath the bare locust-trees around the church, were to be seen numerous empty cars, the horses taken out, and bestowed somewhere under shelter: where all the poor animals found refuge that evening, I never discovered. On reaching the house, I was received at the door by some young ladies, farmers' daughters, who for that occasion had taken possession of the entire domicile—the master and mistress appearing in the character of guests, a delicate simulation, which put both giver and receiver much more at their ease than they could otherwise have felt. I was conducted to the company bed-chamber to unwrap, and to deposit my little gift in the adjoining room, appropriated to the reception of the 'freewill-offerings.' It presented an odd scene of confusion: barrels of flour and apples; bags of buckwheat and Indian meal; hams, and huge hanks of yarn for the Goodman and children's stockings; calico and homespun; pickles and preserves; a box of sugar; a jar of honey; a roll of flannel; a bundle of 'comfortables'; cheese and crackers; all were heaped or scattered upon the floor, forming, it seemed to me, a year's supply of clothing, and almost of food.

'I guess it will be a kind of help,' remarked one of the young ladies in answer to my exclamation of admiring surprise; 'but it's amazing what a profusion of such articles is consumed in twelve months!'

On entering the parlour, I found a numerous assembly of the neighbours, rich and poor, engaged in general conversation, and awaiting the summons to tea. The ladies before mentioned were busy preparing the meal, for which they had brought every requisite from their own homes, and had taxed the house for nothing except fire, water, and a kettle. Tables were joined to form one that nearly filled the modest 'keeping-room,'

and was yet too small to accommodate at one time all the members of the Bee; the seniors of the party, therefore, took the precedence, and were first served, the mistresses of the ceremonies attending the guests. The great staples of the entertainment were smoking-hot butter-milk rolls, and waffles—a cake inherited from the Dutch, and made of butter; it is poured into curiously-shaped iron moulds, and baked in the midst of a glowing fire. Great plates of butter, cheese, and thinly-shaven smoked beef, accompanied these; while deep crystal dishes of various kinds of preserves, gave an air of lightness and elegance to the somewhat heavy display of good things. Every one was helped to everything; and it was amusing to see the heaped-up plate of each individual surrounded by a host of satellites in the forms of Lilliputian saucers, filled with preserved cherries, peaches, quince, and ginger, all to be discussed with the beef, cheese, and butter. There was no conversation during the repast, which fortunately was not a protracted one; both relays had soon finished, and the waiting-maids proceeded to make merry together; then, after restoring everything to its former order, and packing their baskets for the return-journey, they joined the rest of the party.

The evening passed pleasantly in conversation—the elderly folks discoursed on the 'split' which had recently taken place among them on the subject of church government; the matrons debated domestic mysteries; and the young men and maidens talked, laughed, and even flirted; while I, as a stranger and a 'Britisher,' received much attention, and had to talk and listen more, it seemed to me, than was quite fair.

'You are from the old country, madam,' said a Mrs Brown; 'pray now, did you ever become acquainted with my son Hiram?'

'Never, ma'am,' I replied rather emphatically.

'Do tell!' exclaimed the lady; 'and yet he's been there four years, and he's in public life!'

'Indeed; in what capacity?'

'He's with Major Jerry Crane, the great wild-beast speculator! They travel with a splendid caravan, as my son calls it, all over the country, and make considerable money.'

'It's a remarkable good profession in the old country,' observed Mr Jones the miller, who sat near: 'I guess all the wealthiest gentlemen in this section have made their fortunes by it. That splendid hotel at Somers, "The Elephant," was built by one of them!'

'I opine you have no such meetings as this in England?' remarked a pleasant-looking young farmer, as he took the seat next to me.

'We have not,' I replied; 'but you are aware that all church matters are conducted very differently there from what they are in America.'

'I hope so,' said the candid gentleman; 'I reckon, too, a "giving bee" would be considerable of a help to some of those poor curates I've read about! I'll be darned if I could sit and look such a one in the face, while he preached "do unto others, as ye would they should do unto ye!"'

How our native land seems part of ourselves when we are far from it—I blushed as if his words were personal!

About eight o'clock, a general cessation of conversation took place, and a silence of three or four minutes was broken by the minister rising and solemnly inviting us to join him in prayer. All rose, and stood with heads bowed and eyes cast down, while he gave thanks with all the eloquence of unaffected piety for the blessings each enjoyed. When he had ended, another brief silence ensued, and then rose tremblingly, at first from a single voice, the sweet notes of a hymn of praise—soon all joined, and the sacred strain swelled full and loud. The moment it was concluded, the bustle of departure began—hands were hastily shaken, the men ran out to seek their sleighs and horses, while

the women collected their baskets and wraps. The night was glorious—the moon shone with the purest, softest lustre, making the white ground sparkle, and silencing the snow-laden trees; and as each sleigh dashed off with its merry load, their ringing laughter awoke the mountain echoes.

#### LAMARTINE'S HISTORICAL WORK.

THE *History of the Restoration of Monarchy in France*, just completed, may be called Lamartine's greatest work;\* we should be glad to learn, that it has also been the most successful. As an account of the transactions which closed the Bonaparte wars, and placed the Bourbons on the throne of France, it has to drag its way through numberless party intrigues and squabbles, and to discuss various measures of state policy; yet, like its lively and fascinating writer, it is never dull, and may, for the most part, be read as pleasantly as a romance. The work, however, has other merits. While undoubtedly rhetorical, Lamartine is candid and impartial. Sometimes he falls into error; but it is chiefly in details. As a Frenchman, his observations on England and Englishmen are surprisingly correct. His own countrymen have the most reason to blush under his strictures.

Originally a Legitimist, and now a Republican, Lamartine is prepared to be strictly impartial towards Bonaparte. Rising above the illusions which obscure the understanding of so many, he speaks of the great Napoleon exactly as he deserves—an ambitious and selfish man, who caused the death of millions of human beings to promote what he called the glory of France, but which was, in reality, the glory only of the army, with himself at its head. Beyond this barren bequest, Napoleon left little but his name; yet, as he at least did not retrograde into antiquated imbecilities, or conduct his administration through palace intrigues, he has in late times been identified with liberalism and progress. A perusal of M. Lamartine's amusing work will, we think, satisfy the most sceptical, that the permanent reign of the Bourbons was an impossibility. The fault was less in the family itself, than in its immediate followers. From the day that Louis XVIII. arrived at the Tuilleries, all the affairs of the government were managed or deranged by courtiers, as the case might be. The best intentions of the king were continually upset by coteries of meddlesome old ladies and gentlemen, secretly working for some rival interest. One can see that, with the form of a constitution under the charter, no party knew what a constitution was. In Great Britain, ministers hold their place in virtue of possessing parliamentary majorities; and the consequence is, that court intrigue, to install this or that officer of the crown, is totally unknown. In France, under the Bourbons, this great and safe principle was reversed. All was made to depend on court manoeuvre. Lamartine gives an account of the strange and underhand means adopted to remove M. Decazes from the confidence of Louis XVIII. This most able minister, sagacious, moderate, and practical, had the misfortune not to be of noble birth, and the whole influence of the old Royalists was accordingly employed to ruin him. Princes and priests, decayed noblemen and titled ladies, conspired to destroy his fame by the most unscrupulous calumnies. Every plan failing in its aim, a plot was at length devised to sap the king's confidence in the favourite. It consisted in employing a lady of beauty and accomplishments to ingratiate herself with the king; and having done so, she was gradually to whisper malignant untruths into the royal ear. This base scheme was partially successful in its operation; but what really ruined Decazes, was the industriously-circulated and greedily-believed falsehood, that he was



concerned in the assassination of the unfortunate Duke de Berry. The account of this sad tragedy may be taken as a specimen of the work before us.

For a number of years, a fanatic named Louvel, by trade a working-saddler, had meditated the murder of the Bourbons, by killing them off one by one, as circumstances favoured the enterprise. With this terrible crime constantly before him, he purchased two daggers, and frequently left his employment to wait for his victims. At balls, operas, hunting-parties, did this man, for years, lurk about in the expectation of getting near a Bourbon—the king, Count d'Artois, Duke d'Angoulême, Duke de Berry—it was all the same which. No one knew his intentions.

In the meantime, the Duke and Duchess de Berry, solely occupied with their happiness, and strangers to all political factions, gave themselves up, with all the eagerness of their youth and natural dispositions, to the pleasures and fêtes which the carnival multiplied, during the last days of the theatrical season at Paris. Beloved and popular amidst that world of art, of music and the dance which prolongs the Opera-nights till day, they delighted in the enjoyment of this popularity. On the 13th February (1820), they purposed going to the Royal Theatre, where they had not been for some days before. Being both eager and curious in pursuit of amusements, it might be supposed that they would not allow this festive season to pass without making their appearance there. While they were enjoying the prospect of the evening's pleasure, and were occupied with their toilet and with the costumes for the night, the assassin who watched their door, and almost read their very thoughts, conjectured on his part that the attraction of pleasure was about to deliver his prey into his hands.

He had already, for two evenings before, been watching the doors of the Opera-house, and now he attended to execute his purpose. In patience he waited the hour when the company should depart.

Meanwhile the prince and princess, only separated by a wall from the man who was numbering the minutes of their existence, were enjoying in their box, without any presentiment of evil, the pleasures of the performance, and of conversation between the acts. The Duke and Duchess of Orleans were present that evening in a neighbouring box, with their children. The two families, who were very intimate owing to the relationship of the two duchesses, saluted each other with smiles of recognition. During an interval between the performances, the Duke and Duchess de Berry paid their cousins a visit in their box. The duke embraced the children, and played with the little Duke de Chartres, who was also doomed to a tragical death in the flower of his age. On passing through the lobby to return to their own box, the duchess was struck in the breast by a box-door, which was violently thrown open at the moment she was passing. She was then unconscious a few weeks; and fearful that the blow, the fright, and fatigue might be injurious, she expressed a wish to retire before the end of the opera, and the *bal masqué* which was to follow it. The duke rose to conduct her himself to the carriage, intending to return to his box to enjoy the remaining pleasures of the night.

On the summons of the prince's attendants, the royal carriage drove up to the door. The young duchess, supported on one side by her husband's hand, and on the other by that of her equerry, Count de Mesnard, entered the carriage; the Countess de Béthisy, her lady-in-waiting, following her. "Adieu!" said her husband smiling to her, "we shall soon meet again." The footmen folded up the steps of the carriage, and the prince turned round to enter the vestibule from the street. At this moment, Louvel, who had approached like an inoffensive spectator, or a servant who was waiting for his master, sprang, with all the vigour of his

resolution, between the sentinel who was presenting arms, and the footman who was closing the carriage-door, and seizing the left shoulder of the Duke de Berry with his left hand, as if to secure his victim under the knife, he struck him with the poniard in the right side, and left the weapon in the wound. The rapidity of the act, the confusion of the bystanders, the uncertain light afforded by the torches, and the staggering of the prince under the blow, prevented the Count de Choiseul and the Count de Mesnard at the moment from discerning the murderous act and gesture of the unknown. He fled unpursued towards the Rue de Richelieu; and having turned the corner of the street, walked with a careless pace towards the Boulevard.

The Duke de Berry, struck by an invisible hand, and thrown by the force of the blow against the Count de Mesnard, had only, as it always happens, felt the shock and not the wound. On recovering himself, he put his hand on the place where he had been struck, and it there fell upon the hilt of a dagger. A horrible light broke in upon him. "I am assassinated; I am a dead man!" he cried. "I feel the dagger: that man has killed me!" At this exclamation, the Duchess de Berry, whose carriage had not yet departed, uttered a piercing scream. "Open the door! open the door!" she cried to the footman, who still had his hand upon it: without waiting for the step to be lowered, she sprang out and threw her arms round her husband, who had just extracted the poniard, which covered her dress with his blood. They seated the fainting prince upon a bench in the outer hall, where the servants wait for their masters. They tore open his dress, and the blood flowing from the wound, indicated the spot where the blow had been struck, upon the right breast. "I am killed," he repeated on recovering his senses; "send for a priest: come here, my dear wife, that I may die in your arms!"

During this momentary pause in the vestibule, the sentinel, the footmen, and three gendarmes, horror-struck at the deed, ran in pursuit of the assassin. He had already passed the façade of the Opera-house, in the Rue de Richelieu, and had concealed himself in the shadow of an arcade, which runs from this street under the broad arches of the Bibliothèque. A waiter of a café, named Paulnier, there seized him round the body, struggled with him, and, assisted by the sentinel and the gendarmes, brought him back to the place where he had committed the murder. He had nearly fallen a victim to the fury of the spectators, who collared and dragged him towards the vestibule; but the officers of the prince, trembling lest they should destroy with the criminal the secret of the plot of the crime, saved him, and had him conducted to the Opera-guard-house. M. de Clermont-Lodève followed him there to witness his first examination. They found upon him the second dagger, and the sheath of the one which he had left in the bosom of the prince. M. de Clermont returned with this weapon, and these evidences of the crime, to the vestibule.

The Duke de Berry was no longer there. He had recovered his senses, and had been removed in the arms of his servants to a small saloon behind his box, where he was surrounded by medical men, who were probing his wound. "Alas!" said he, on learning the apprehension and name of the assassin, "what a cruel fate, that I should die by the hand of a man!" A ray of hope for a moment inspired the princess and the medical men: he did not, however, take of it, nor wished he to flatter his wife with an illusion which must only redouble her affliction. "No," said he, with a cool, firm, and incredulous tone; "I will not delude myself; the poniard entered up to the very hilt, I can assure you." His sight was now becoming dim from failing strength, occasioned by loss of blood, and he felt about for his wife, stretching his arms in all directions.

"Are you there, Caroline?" he demanded. "Yes," the princess tenderly replied; "I am here, and I shall never quit you!" The surgeon of his household, the companion of his exile, shocked at the rumour of the crime, had hastened to the side of the dying prince; and the blood having ceased to flow, he sucked the wound. "What are you doing, Bougon?" eagerly demanded the dying prince; "perhaps the poniard was poisoned!"

"His first word had been to ask not for a doctor but a priest. Struck in the very noontide of youth and of pleasure, there had been in his mind no transition between the thoughts of time and the thoughts of eternity. He had passed in one second from the spectacle of a fête to the contemplation of his end, like those men who, by a sudden immersion in cold water, are snatched from the burning delirium of intoxication. The priest came at length; and members of the royal family hurried to the place on learning the dreadful intelligence. Surgeons, the most celebrated in Paris, also attended; but the case was beyond their aid. Life was fast ebbing. His wife did not quit him for a moment. 'He put his fingers on her head, as if to exhibit one last act of tenderness by caressing her beautiful hair.' 'Caroline,' he said to her, 'take care of yourself, for the sake of the child you bear.' This was the first revelation of the birth of a son who escaped the crime, but not the evil fortune of his race. He recommended his servants with tears to his father; and expressed a wish to see his assassin, to demand of him the cause of his hatred, to reproach him for his injustice, and pardon him for his death. 'Who is this man?' he murmured; 'what have I done to him?' It is perhaps some person that I have unknowingly offended." The Count d'Artois assured him that the assassin had no personal animosity against him. "It must be some maniac, then," said the duke. "Ah! that I would live until the king arrives, that he may grant me the pardon of this man! Promise me, father—promise me, brother—promise me all of you, to ask the king to spare this man's life!"

"They all promised him this, to calm the ardour of generosity and pardon which preyed upon his mind. His natural goodness displayed itself at the price of his own blood."

The king, apprised of the disaster, arrived at day-break. "The clattering of the horses of the escort on the pavement of the street made the dying prince start with joy. 'Uncle!' he exclaimed, as soon as he saw the king, 'give me your hand that I may kiss it for the last time!' Louis XVIII. held out his hand, and grasped that of his nephew. 'Uncle,' resumed the prince anxiously, 'I beg of you, as my dying prayer, to spare the life of my assassin!' 'My dear nephew,' replied the king, 'you are not in such danger as you imagine—we will speak of it another time.' 'Ah! you do not consent," replied the duke, with an accent of doubt and sorrow. 'Oh! say yes, say yes, that I may die in peace. Pardon, pardon for the man!' As the king, however, was silent, or endeavoured to divert his nephew's thoughts to other subjects: 'Ah! the pardon of this man,' murmured the duke, with an expression of bitterness upon his lips, 'would at least have consoled me in my last moments! If,' he persisted, 'I could only have the gratification of knowing that this man's life might not be shed for me after my death!' join him!"

"A few mowed under, he expired, still articulating in his delirium his ungratified wish of his heart. He died in the act of pardoning; a great soul obscured in life, shining forth in death; a hero of clemency, having at the first effort accomplished the most difficult and the most meritorious act of humanity—that of dying well."

"The deep sobs which had hitherto been repressed, gushed forth at his last sigh. His wife, in a state of

delirium, cut off her hair, as a last token of affection, and laid it upon his body; then wildly cursing the country in which her husband had been murdered, she demanded of the king, in angry accents, permission to retire for ever to Sicily. The king knelt down beside the bed, and closed with his own hand the lips and eyelids of the last living hope of his race."

While the Parisians were horror-struck with this unforeseen crime, and lamented it as an irreparable disaster, the ultra-royalists of the palace hailed it as an opportunity of ruining Decazes, by accusing him of being an accomplice of Louvel. With the view of aiding the surgeons in their consultations, Decazes had thought of ascertaining whether the dagger was poisoned, and he accordingly, in an under-tone of voice, asked the question of Louvel. This whisper, reported to the courtiers, was held up as a proof of complicity; and before any inquiry was made, the minister was denounced in the Chamber of Deputies as being an accomplice in the assassination. On the trial, and at the execution of Louvel, the wretched murderer declared that no one had conspired with him, and that the deed was entirely his own. The world at large acknowledged the truth of the declaration; but not so the court, and, greatly against the will of Louis XVIII, he was under the necessity of dismissing by far the best minister of the Restoration. The whole transaction, as faithfully and graphically detailed by Lamartine—the honest indignation of Decazes, the distress of the king, and the meanness of the Count d'Artois, the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême, and the Duchess of Berry, in pledging themselves to a falsehood—forms one of the most instructive facts in modern history.

#### LOSSES OF HUMAN LIFE BY WAR.

The last number of the *Companion to the Almanac* contains a curious return, compiled from official sources, of the killed and wounded of the regular British troops in the military and naval actions from 1793 to 1815. The results exhibit a less amount of bloodshed than the popular imagination usually connects with great wars. The total number of killed was 19,796, of whom 1160 were officers. The total number of wounded was 74,359, of whom 9720 were officers. The proportion of killed in the navy as compared with those in the army, is about one-fourth; but the wounded were in a much less proportion; a fact which would seem to imply, that the means of destruction is much more effective in the former branch of force. It would manifestly, however, be wrong to speak, in round numbers, of 20,000 lives as the total amount of loss by sea and land during these twenty-two years of war. We know not how many of the wounded never recovered, or had their lives shortened and embittered by the injuries they had sustained. We are also without any means of stating the number of the *missing*, or of tracing their fates. It would probably be nearer the truth to speak of 40,000 lives sacrificed by the war. The actions of that warlike period were not of a sanguinary character during the first few years. For example, the loss of men in 1797 was only thirty-eight, three of whom were officers. Even in the year of the arduous campaigns of Sir Ralph Abercromby in Egypt, the loss was no more than 507 men and twenty-two officers. In the years of the Peninsular campaigns, the numbers increase to 1380 in 1809, which includes the slaughter at Corunna; and 1628 in 1811, which saw the bloody encounters of Barossa, Fuentes de Oñoro, and Albuera. The slain of 1813 were nearly 3000. At Waterloo, there fell 171 officers, and 2341 private men, while the wounded were respectively 680, and 9005.

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